

Department of Human Services

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Articles in Today's Clips Friday, October 20, 2006

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Published October 20, 2006

Doctor: Ricky's skull not fractured

Pathologist can't confirm boy, 7, hit with hammer

By Kevin Grasha
Lansing State Journal

A day after describing how Ricky Holland died slowly from a head injury, a forensic pathologist admitted she could not confirm if the 7-year-old had been struck in the head with a hammer.

Dr. Joyce deJong said her physical examination of Ricky's badly decomposed remains showed no signs of a skull fracture.

But based on her review of Tim Holland's court testimony, the Sparrow Hospital forensic pathologist determined Ricky died from complications of a head wound caused by a hammer blow.

"You're assuming what he said is true?" Lisa Holland's co-counsel Andrew Abood asked.

"Correct," deJong said.

Tim Holland has pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in Ricky's July 2005 death and spent three days on the stand testifying against his wife, Lisa Holland. The Williamston woman is charged with murder and child abuse, but she maintains Tim Holland killed their adopted son.

Three people, including Tim Holland, have testified Lisa Holland admitted

What's Next

- Lisa Holland's murder trial continues Monday before Ingham County Circuit Judge Paula Manderfield. Psychologist Dr. Elaine Pomeranz of the University of Michigan is expected to testify.

TRIAL RECAP

Week 1, Sept. 18-22:

- In opening arguments, prosecutors say the case against Lisa Holland is about manipulation, deception and concealment. Defense attorneys counter the prosecution's key witness, Tim Holland, is not credible and his guilty plea was intended solely to protect himself.

- A Jackson County social worker testifies that in February 2001, Ricky said Lisa Holland tied him up at night. The social worker filed a report with Child Protective Services, but the report was not substantiated.

- Jackson school officials testify the Ricky they knew was not the same boy described and often disparaged by Lisa Holland.

- Testimony also reveals Ricky was removed from elementary school by his parents after it was determined he did not qualify for the special education services.

Week 2, Sept. 25-29:

- Investigators found tiny blood stains in several rooms of Tim and Lisa Holland's Williamston home, a state police forensic scientist testifies.

- A new portrait of Lisa Holland emerges in court: A loving mother who frequently called her family physician with child-rearing questions. But testimony also revealed a doctor last saw Ricky on Sept. 20, 2002.

- Lisa Holland's hairdresser testifies that as hundreds of people searched for Ricky in early July 2005, Holland told her "she just needed to go on with her life."

- A Williamston neighbor who lived across the street from the Hollands describes an incident in May 2005 when he found Ricky in his kitchen. "They don't want me anymore," the neighbor testifies Ricky said.

Week 3, Oct. 2-5

- A former Ingham County Jail inmate testifies Lisa Holland told her Ricky made her angry, so she threw a hammer at the boy's head. She then picked it up and hit Ricky again.

striking the boy in the head with a metal tack-hammer.

Cause of death uncertain

The trial is in its fifth week. The prosecution is expected to present its final witness Monday.

Under questioning from Abood, deJong also said that because of a lack of soft tissue, she could not rule out suffocation, strangulation, abdominal trauma or poisoning as causes of Ricky's death.

She also could not say if Ricky was alive or dead when his body was placed inside two garbage bags and dumped in a rural, marshlike area near Dansville.

Tim Holland has testified the boy had no heartbeat or pulse when he found him in bed the night of July 1, 2005, with his eyes wide open.

Inconsistent injuries

DeJong also admitted Tim Holland never described a black eye or facial swelling, which she said should have resulted from a fracture found on Ricky's skull that appeared to be healing.

It was possible, she said, that injury could have occurred more than a month before Ricky died.

She said Tim Holland never described symptoms of a shoulder injury, despite fractures found in that area of Ricky's skeleton.

Contact Kevin Grasha at 267-1347 or kgrasha@lsj.com.

- A nurse at Ricky's Jackson elementary school testifies she reported suspected abuse to Child Protective Services at least twice.

- A second jail inmate testified Lisa Holland confessed to killing Ricky. But Holland's defense attorneys focus on how Tim Holland lied to investigators several times in the case, including in a Jan. 27 statement to police during which he told authorities Lisa killed Ricky by striking him with a hammer.

- A video-recorded interview of Lisa Holland talking with police is played for the jury, during which Lisa speculated her husband might tell police that she hit Ricky and that he then fell into a wall.

- A weekend interview with Tim Holland yielded new information about how Ricky died, prosecutors said. As a result, a forensic pathologist is expected to update the boy's cause of death. The revelation led the judge to postpone the trial a day.

Week 4, Oct. 9-12

- Prosecutors show a 2005 TV interview with Lisa and Tim Holland where the couple begs for the safe return of Ricky, trying to show the couple's statements after the boy was reported missing were nothing but a ruse.

- A forensic scientist testifies a T-shirt stained with Ricky's blood provides clues as to how he was killed. Most the blood - which probably came from a wound on the back or top of Ricky's head - either dripped from his hair or brushed against the shirt like a paintbrush, the scientist says.

- Tim Holland describes the last week of Ricky's life, saying the boy was in a near-catatonic state, not eating or drinking and often incapable of supporting his small body. He says he found Ricky's lifeless body in his bed the night of July 1, 2005. He describes how he hid the body that night in a marshlike area near Dansville.

- A day after Tim Holland described in vivid detail watching his 7-year-old son, Ricky, slowly die during the last week of June 2005, he admitted lying to investigators several times about what happened. He said he gave false statements because he feared losing his family. He said the lying got out of control, and he didn't know how to stop.

This week

- At the conclusion of his testimony, Tim Holland told jurors he should be believed, "Because I am standing here before you now to take responsibility for my role in my son's death." Referring to his wife, he added: "I just hope Lisa will stand up and take responsibility for her actions."

- Based on Tim Holland's testimony, Dr. Joyce deJong said Ricky Holland died from complications of a head wound caused by a hammer blow. She said the boy probably lived his final days in pain, with a head injury and a small fracture in his face.

Published October 20, 2006
[From Lansing State Journal]

More letters to the editor

Father 'gutless'

In the Oct. 12 LSJ, the caption under Tim Holland's picture referred to the "gut-wrenching testimony" about Ricky Holland's last days/hours. I assume the gut-wrenching the writer inferred was that of the listeners at the trial. Certainly he/she couldn't have been referring to Tim Holland; that man has to be the most gutless man around!

He apparently stood by and watched all those years as his wife abused/maltreated an innocent child, without lifting a finger to stop her. He is just as guilty of Ricky's death as if he had struck the fatal blow himself.

I only hope they both realize the necessity of getting down on their knees and begging forgiveness of our Creator, lest they spend an eternity in hell for their cruel acts.

Nancy J. Hill
East Lansing

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Man charged with leaving 2-year-old on side of freeway

DETROIT -- A 22-year-old man has been charged with abandoning a 2-year-old girl on the side of a freeway.

Clifford H. Nicen II, of Detroit, was charged in a warrant with second-degree child abuse and exposing with intent to injure or abandon a child, the Wayne County prosecutor's office said Thursday.

The exposing charge is punishable by up to 10 years in prison and the abuse charge is punishable by up to four years upon conviction.

The girl was found unharmed Tuesday night along Interstate 94.

A witness reported seeing a Chevrolet Camaro pull over on the freeway's shoulder before someone put the girl out of the car and drove away, prosecutors said.

The witness picked up the girl and called police while following the Camaro, they said. Officers located the car and arrested Nicen. The girl was later reunited with her parents, the Detroit Free Press reported.

Police reports state Nicen is the girl's uncle, but family members have said he is her cousin.

Prosecutors said they did not know the motive for the incident.

The girl's family reported her missing from a Chuck E. Cheese's restaurant in Roseville shortly before she was spotted on I-94 about 10 miles away from the restaurant, The Detroit News reported.

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Friday, October 20, 2006

Wayne Briefs

Detroit Felony charges filed in abandoned baby case

A 22-year-old relative of a toddler abandoned on an I-94 ramp at Connor on Tuesday night was charged Thursday with two felony counts of child abuse. Wayne County Prosecutor Kym L. Worthy charged Clifford H. Nicen II with exposing with intent to injure or abandon a child and second-degree child abuse, which carry penalties of 10 and four years in prison. The child was picked up and turned over to Detroit police by a passerby who saw someone put the child out on the curb before driving away Tuesday night.

ClickOnDetroit.com

Pair Arrested In Social Worker's Death; Baby Found

Social Worker Was Beaten To Death

POSTED: 12:43 am EDT October 20, 2006

UPDATED: 6:27 am EDT October 20, 2006

GODFREY, Ill. -- The FBI and Illinois police arrested two people in connection with the killing of a western Kentucky social worker, and they recovered a baby allegedly taken by the couple following that incident.

Christopher Wayne Luttrell, 23, and Renee Terrell, 33, were captured in Godfrey, Ill., near St. Louis. Terrell's son, Saige, was found safe and was taken to a nearby hospital for observation, according to police.

Police had been searching for Luttrell and Terrell following the death of social worker Boni Frederick, 67, who was allegedly killed while taking Saige to visit his non-custodial mother in Henderson, Ky., on Monday.

Saige had been taken away from Terrell when he was 13 days old because of neglect allegations, police said.

According to police, local officials and the FBI received a tip on the couple's whereabouts Thursday afternoon.

Law enforcement officials surrounded a camper on a farm in Godfrey around 9:15 p.m., recovered Saige and took the couple into custody without incident. Saige was found in good condition.

Police said the social worker had taken the developmentally disabled 9-month-old baby to his mother's house for a visit. Officers were called when the woman didn't return to work.

The 67-year-old Frederick was later found dead of what investigators said was blunt and sharp force trauma to the head, and Luttrell and Terrell took Saige and escaped in Frederick's car, prompting an Amber Alert, according to police.

Police said the couple had initially been spotted in Smithboro, Ill., captured on a gas station surveillance camera using Frederick's credit card to purchase gasoline. Later, Frederick's purse was found along Interstate 64 near Mount Vernon, Ill.

The FBI issued warrants on Thursday for unlawful flight to avoid prosecution on state kidnapping charges.

Officials said it was cooperation from the community that helped capture the pair.

FBI agent John Stafford wouldn't elaborate on what kind of cooperation led to the arrests of Terrell and Luttrell.

But Sgt. John Nevels of the Henderson, Ky., police department said the pair had started reaching out to people to help them after they ran out of money and food.

They were captured in a rural area near Godfrey. They had been hiding in a camper after their car apparently broke down and got stuck in mud.

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AMBER ALERT

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October 20, 2006

Closed day care causes scramble

State's investigation of claims that abuse of toddler wasn't reported at Plymouth center affects 100 families.

Iveory Perkins / The Detroit News

PLYMOUTH -- This week's closure of a child care center under investigation by the state on claims it failed to report abuse has sent some 100 families scrambling to find other options for their children.

The Plymouth office of Childtime Child Care Inc., which has centers across Metro Detroit, was closed Monday by the Michigan Office of Children and Adult Licensing.

It is investigating claims the center failed to report abuse of Allison Newman, a 2-year-old who allegedly was killed by her foster mom last month at an upscale home in Canton Township.

Northville resident Shyla Khatiwala had to place her two sons in the Childtime center in Canton Township.

"We were upset because we had nothing but good experiences at Childtime," said Khatiwala, a Plymouth doctor, adding her 2-year old son shared a classroom with Allison. "My children are happy there, and we are very anxious to get back to the center."

The center has provided a list of day care centers to parents, said Childtime Learning Center spokeswoman Amy Popp.

"The children are our top priority, so we are taking the necessary steps to re-open our Plymouth location," said Popp in a prepared statement. "The closure of the center is unnecessary and has caused undue stress to the families we provide care for."

The investigation follows allegations by a former Childtime employee, Cher Majeske, who claimed she reported seeing bruises on Allison to her supervisor in July but nothing was done.

"I am not sure why my report wasn't treated as a big deal, but I am glad the situation isn't being ignored," Majeske said. Newman's foster mother, Carol Poole, 40, faces a preliminary hearing Nov. 8 in 35th District Court on murder and two other charges.

She phoned 911 early on Sept. 22 to report the child unresponsive, claimed the child accidentally hit her head the day before, but reportedly has told authorities conflicting stories about the child's injuries.

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Gov Signs Long-Term Health Care Bills

MIRS, Thursday, October 19, 2006

Gov. Jennifer [GRANHOLM](#) signed today two bills that create the Long Term Care Insurance Model Act, which creates certain standards for how companies can sell long-term care health insurance.

Long-term care insurance is a newer type of insurance and is used to cover extended care for old or seriously ill citizens. Today, Granholm signed [HB 5348](#), sponsored by Rep. Kevin [GREEN](#) (R-Wyoming), and [HB 5349](#), sponsored by Paula [ZELENKO](#) (D-Burton).

Granholm said the bills were put together based off of 2005 recommendations of the Governor's Long-Term Care Task Force, which was established in 2004.

"When I established the Long-Term Care Task Force, I charged them with identifying ways to improve care for seniors and vulnerable citizens in Michigan while addressing the impact of rising costs," said Granholm. "As a result of their outstanding work, we are already taking important steps like providing a Single Points of Entry (SPE) to make accessing care easier. This legislation will help ensure that citizens understand their insurance options and are choosing policies that meet their needs."

The bills strengthen insurance agent training requirements before they sell long-term care insurance and require that insurers provide customers with additional information about policy options, including forfeiture.

Published: October 20, 2006 3:00AM

Detroit Free Press

NATION/WORLD

Across the nation

October 20, 2006

WASHINGTON: Fewer in U.S. get health insurance

A growing number of Americans are working for employers that don't offer health insurance, said two reports released Thursday.

One showed that the percentage of working Americans with insurance fell from 81.2% in 2001 to 77.4% in 2005, or about 2.2 million workers. Another found that about three-fourths of the decline was due to a lack of employers offering it or ineligibility.

Both reports, sponsored by the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Alliance for Health Reform, show self-employed people and those who work for small businesses are more likely to be uninsured.

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Article published October 20, 2006

Zero tolerance gives rise to Michigan's 'throwaway people'

ANN ARBOR, Mich. - What happens to students like Chloe, who was expelled from school in eighth grade for assault?

Is she sent to some sort of alternative education program - or a version of what used to be called reform school?

In Michigan, the answer is, mostly, no. The shocking truth is "that no matter how young they are, many are sent out to roam the streets and never get back in school again," said Leslie Harrington, executive director of the Student Advocacy Center of Michigan.

Her center, founded in 1975, is perhaps the only group providing free, non-legal advice and help to students and families with such problems. But in many cases, there is little she can do.

What happens to kids in Michigan's foster-care system who reach their 18th birthday and technically become adults?

"The adults you have been living with bid you good-bye ... The door shuts behind you; you are on your own and very much alone," Maura Corrigan, chief justice of the Michigan Supreme Court and a longtime foster care advocate, wrote in a 2004 newspaper essay.

"You have no job, no family, and no idea how to handle your new independence," she added. Most don't handle it very well.

Foster care kids who "age out" of the system and those who are permanently expelled from school are the throwaway people, those who fall between the cracks of the system. Every year, about 450 young people become adults while in Michigan foster care, and thereby age out of what thin support system and safety net they've known.

Last year, according to the Student Advocacy Center, at least 1,642 students were expelled from Michigan schools, a number eight times as high as it was barely a decade ago.

Why the dramatic increase? The onset of zero tolerance policies. Nobody questions that some students are so violent and disruptive that they do pose a threat to the entire school population. But few - fewer than 10 percent - fall into that category, according to Peri Stone-Palmquist, who has studied expulsions for the Michigan Association for Children with Emotional Disorders. "The

majority are expelled for drugs and fighting, but others are kicked out for causes as vague as disruption of the school process."

Many never get back in school, and their chances at life virtually vanish. "Michigan has one of the harshest discipline codes in the country, allowing expulsion for a particularly broad range of offenses, providing little local flexibility, and discouraging creative, proportional responses to misbehavior," Ms. Stone-Palmquist said.

The Student Advocacy Center thinks this makes no sense for anyone, that the costs to the state will be far greater in the long run than if programs were in place to reach and help those kids.

But that isn't politically popular; getting tough on crime and proclaiming zero tolerance for bad behavior is - especially in an election year. Besides, high school dropouts seldom vote.

Foster kids who reach technical adulthood aren't much better off. One national study found that four years after aging out, less than half of all former foster children had graduated from high school. One out of every four had been homeless. One out of every four young men had spent time in jail. Nearly two-thirds had been jobless for long periods, and nearly half were already parents themselves.

Michigan has moved to do something about improving the lot of older foster care youths. Chief Justice Corrigan and Marianne Udow, director of the Michigan Department of Human Services, chaired a task force on foster care that just presented a report and a broad number of recommendations to the legislature.

Among them were voluntary extension of the time a young person can stay in foster care and expanded summer training programs, financial aid, and other educational assistance programs. The task force, which was bipartisan, also recommended providing expanded and lengthened medical and dental coverage to those emerging from foster care.

Some of their recommendations can become reality now. Others will have to await the next elected legislature in January.

Meanwhile, at the Student Advocacy Center in Ann Arbor, those who try to help kids who need it the most wish that they could arouse some sympathy from those who make the rules.

Failing that, some common sense might help. "The state's harsh approach does little to increase safety in schools or communities," Ms. Stone-Palmquist said.

"Michigan lawmakers and educators have answers at their fingertips. Students should not have to fight to get into school. We should be fighting for them," she concluded.

Niles Daily Star

ONLINE EDITION

[Print Page](#)

By MICHAEL C. GUILMETTE JR. / Niles Daily Star

Thursday, October 19, 2006 10:36 AM EDT

NILES - A crowd of judges, lawyer and legal professionals packed the Orchard Hills dining room Wednesday evening to hear one of Michigan's top judges speak.

Justice Maura Corrigan of the Michigan Supreme Court served as keynote speaker at the Berrien-Cass Legal Support Professionals dinner highlighting Court Observance Week and honoring area judges and attorneys who have been in practice for 25 years or more.

Corrigan, from Detroit, spoke passionately about what she feels is a critical issue facing Michigan and the rest of the country - children born out of wedlock and children being raised in foster care.

"This is the greatest moral crisis we are facing," Corrigan said, blaming the problem on the breakdown of family units. "What used to be an institution is now an option."

She pointed out the percentage of children born into two-parent households has fallen to 40 percent nationwide, and as low as 10 percent in Detroit.

Corrigan has long been an advocate of child welfare, and she sat on the Pew Commission for Children in Foster Care. She noted the number of children in foster care in Michigan is 20,000 - and 40 years ago, this number was only 1,200.

What the nation needs to solve this problem, she said, is a shift in culture.

"We stopped smoking in the United States," Corrigan said. "Why can't we support marriage?"

Corrigan encouraged those in attendance to mentor children in broken homes and in foster care. She said she has mentored three children who have "aged out" of the foster care system, referring to children who were in foster care until age 18.

Corrigan spoke very highly of the Michigan Supreme Court, saying the state's highest court has done a lot of good work and it is held up as a model for other state courts. The caseload for the court is heavy, averaging about 2,600 cases heard each year, she added.

Elected to the court in 1998, she has twice served as chief justice. She likened managing the sometimes contentious court to "being a chaperone at a Serbo-Croatian dance," a line that brought laughter from the crowd.

Running for re-election in November, Corrigan encouraged everyone to pay attention to the non-partisan portion of the ballot - the portion where elected state justices and judges are listed. She also told the group to be mindful of the ballot proposals being put to the voters.

Corrigan, who was on President Bush's "short list" to replace Sandra Day O'Connor on the U.S. Supreme Court, said she was honored to be mentioned.

She said the consideration was a product of the work the court has done.

She was also pleased to be able to address so many noted colleagues at the dinner.

"I feel very privileged and honored to commend the many years of service put in by these people this evening," Corrigan said.



Muskegon Chronicle

Migrant workers become scarce

Friday, October 20, 2006

By Barton Deiters

CHRONICLE NEWS SERVICE

West Michigan farmers say the fear of immigration raids has created a shortage of migrant workers, leaving them scrambling to find help.

Philip and Kathy Carter's apple orchards in New Era are getting by with eight pickers this year, rather than the 12 to 15 who normally work for them during the harvest.

"Some of the fellows we've had working for us in the past didn't even contact us this year," said Kathy Carter. "That seemed kind of strange."

Bob Markiewicz, director of safety and human resources for New Era Canning, says his company hired more migrant workers three years ago than it did today. Some of those workers have simply become permanent residents of the area, and continue to work for New Era Canning, he said.

But Al Dietrich, owner of Ridgeview Orchards in Conklin, said the number of migrant workers at his farm is "way down."

Dietrich said farms have had to share the labor that is available, with workers moving from farm to farm depending on need. He said he usually hires 120 or more workers, but this year has hired only about 60.

He said many of his migrant workers are concerned about aggressive tactics by immigration officials, which began after Sept. 11, 2001, and that this year has been the most difficult so far.

"It's been tight," agreed Don Rasch, a farmer in Alpine Township. "I think there's a lot of fear in the labor force."

Teresa Hendricks, director of the Legal Assistance Program, said immigration sweeps and rumors of sweeps are keeping workers out of West Michigan.

And the shortage of workers will affect consumers.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture said it expects the price of fruits and vegetables to increase by about 4.3 percent in 2006 compared with a 2.1 percent increase in 2005, in part because of scarcity of migrant workers. The department reports the number of hired workers is down 11 percent from last year.

However, the more serious consequences are with workers and their families.

The family of Karla -- an honor student, first chair in her band and an illegal immigrant who came to Michigan this summer -- fled when a school administrator told her she would probably not be able to go to Ogemaw Heights High School without a visa.

"My dad got really scared because he didn't want us to be separated," said the 15-year-old sophomore, now at a North Carolina school, who has been in the U.S. since she was 6 years old. "We packed up our stuff and left Michigan at night."

Karla's case illustrates what is happening to immigrants, whether here illegally or not, according to Damien Sanchez, a lawyer with Migrant Legal Assistance.

"There is definitely a sense of fear, especially on the west side of the state," Sanchez said.

Fueling the fear, Sanchez said, is news of sweeps done by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents, such as last month when 55 people were arrested over five days in West Michigan.

The operation targeted people living illegally in West Michigan as part of "Operation Return to Sender" of the federal Department of Homeland Security. Nationally since June, the effort has arrested 2,179 people.

Grand Rapids attorney Richard Kessler, who specializes in immigration law, says the speed and aggressiveness of the program is a concern. He said people are scheduled to be deported who might be listed mistakenly or have not exhausted all their legal options.

"By the time you get the paperwork, they may already be back in Mexico or wherever," Kessler said. He said some people swept up were "in the wrong place at the wrong time" by being at the home of a targeted individual.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement spokesman Greg Palmore said the operation strictly targeted law-breakers and said it has been successful.

"We'll be back; that's for sure," he said.

Jeronimo Orrosouieta-Noyola said he has been sent back to Mexico about 20 times, but it's worth it to come back.

He said he can tell things are getting tougher because the "coyotes" who bring illegal immigrants to the border now charge \$2,500 instead of the previous \$2,000. Orrosouieta-Noyola says nearly every penny he makes goes back to his family in Mexico.

He said now he cannot get a driver's license or legal plates for his car, so when he gets pulled over, "I get out of the car and run."

He said as long as there is work and money to made, there will be people willing to come across -- and a fence or wall won't stop them.

"We'll just get over it or around it," Orrosouieta-Noyola said. "We will get through any barrier."

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Published October 20, 2006

Raids cause migrant worker shortage, Michigan farmers say

Midday update

By the Associated Press

GRAND RAPIDS - Farmers say worries about possible immigration raids have created a shortage of migrant workers in western Michigan this fall, leading them to share the available laborers.

"It's been tight," Don Rasch, a farmer in Kent County's Alpine Township, told The Grand Rapids Press for a story published Thursday. "I think there's a lot of fear in the labor force."

Teresa Hendricks, director of the Michigan Migrant Legal Assistance Project Inc., said she agrees that immigration sweeps and rumors of sweeps are keeping workers out of the region.

"There is definitely a sense of fear, especially on the west side of the state," said Damien Sanchez, a lawyer for the Grand Rapids organization.

Fueling that fear are news stories about sweeps by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents. In a five-day sweep last month, agents arrested 55 fugitive illegal immigrants in western Michigan who had disappeared after receiving deportation orders.

The sweep was part of a national effort, dubbed "Operation Return to Sender," that has led to 2,179 arrests since June. The initiative, which specifically targets lawbreakers, has been a success, said Detroit-based ICE spokesman Gregory Palmore.

"We'll be back, that's for sure," he said.

Richard Kessler, a Grand Rapids lawyer who specializes in immigration law, said the operation's speed and aggressiveness concern him. He said people are scheduled to be deported who might not have exhausted all of their legal options.

"By the time you get the paperwork, they may already be back in Mexico or wherever," Kessler said.

The labor shortage is expected to affect consumers. The U.S. Department of Agriculture predicts that prices for fruits and vegetables will rise about 4.3 percent in 2006 compared with a 2.1 percent increase in 2005, in part because of scarcity of migrant workers.

The department reports that the number of hired workers is down 11 percent from last year.

Al Dietrich, owner of Ridgeview Orchards in Conklin, said the raids have left growers like him

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scrambling to find enough migrant workers. He usually employs 120 or more workers but this year has hired only about 60.

"We've been way down," Dietrich said.

One illegal immigrant, Jeronimo Orrosouieta-Noyola, said he has been sent back to Mexico about 20 times but it's worth it to come back. He said he sends nearly all the money he earns to his family in Mexico.

As long as there is work and money to made, he said, no border fence or wall will stop him or others like him from returning to the United States.

"We'll just get over it or around it," Orrosouieta-Noyola said. "We will get through any barrier."

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KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

ISAAC session rallies support for justice

Friday, October 20, 2006

By Chris Meehan%%par%%cmeehan@kalamazoogazette.com

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A local faith-based social-action group enlisted a well-known ally on Thursday for its campaign for social justice: Gov. Jennifer Granholm.

Granholm was at Galilee Baptist Church on Thursday night and, among other things, threw her support behind an initiative to use federal highway dollars to hire and train highway workers in Michigan.

Appearing at the annual public meeting of the Interfaith Strategy for Action and Advocacy in the Community, or ISAAC, the Democratic incumbent in the Nov. 7 election drew cheers and a standing ovation when she agreed to do what she can to use a portion of federal highway money to develop apprenticeship programs to train workers to build and maintain state roadways.

Republican gubernatorial candidate Dick DeVos was unable to attend the session, but candidates of both parties in various races were on hand.

Granholm addressed several topics in the few minutes she was allotted to speak to the nearly 1,000 people gathered in the pews at the church, on the north side of Kalamazoo.

Standing on the platform, the governor said she sees finding jobs for the unemployed as a spiritual mandate.

"As people of faith, we are committed to social-justice issues. Jobs and health care are not just economic, but they are moral issues," she said.

Those were just two of the issues ISAAC addressed in skits, speeches and presentations during the 90-minute meeting at the church.

"God has called us to do the work of social justice," John Davis, a member of Mount Zion Baptist Church, told the crowd. "Tonight, we lift our voices, open our hearts and extend our hands on behalf of the hungry, the tired, the weary, the voiceless."

ISAAC, which has more than 15 local member congregations, urged people of faith to join in promoting an agenda that includes fighting the anti-affirmative-action Proposition 2 on the November ballot.

Elder Douglas King, of Tabernacle Church of God in Christ, said that it is "not just black folks who will suffer" if Proposition 2 passes. The proposition writes into the state Constitution provisions that, he said, dismantle affirmative-action programs that benefit both other minorities and women.

"What does not serve us all well does not serve any of us well," said Elder Daniel Cunningham, of the Greater Faith Empowerment Center.

ISAAC representatives also asked the state, county, township and city lawmakers who were present to support a program that gives incentives to home builders to construct low-priced homes in market-rate housing developments.

Already, those attending the public meeting learned, a developer has agreed to work with ISAAC on an inclusionary-housing proposal.

Also on the agenda was a push to find county and state funding for an initiative called the Nurse-Family Partnership Program, which would link nurses with at-risk mothers to help the moms during and after a pregnancy.

Carolyn Williams, a retired Kalamazoo County probate judge, helped work on the ISAAC task force that recommended creation of the nurse-family program, the focus of which would be to help prepare young people for school and to find their places in the world.

“A program like this helps develop skills of the mothers and reduces domestic violence and child abuse,” Williams said. “This program would help break the cycle of neglect, abuse and violence.”

A final item on ISAAC's agenda was urging Kalamazoo County voters to pass the Countywide Transportation Millage, which will be on the Nov. 7 ballot.

Three people who use the public-transportation system testified to how important it is for them to have public transportation for getting to work, school and other places.

After they spoke, Eileen Scamehorn, a member of the transportation task force, said, “We all benefit from public transportation. It is for all of us.”

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Governor Appointments

MIRS, Thursday, October 19, 2006

Michigan Developmental Disability Council

- Cynthia **FARRELL**, of Owosso, was appointed to succeed Jacqueline **DAY**, whose term expired, to represent the Michigan Department of Human Services for a term expiring Sept. 30, 2009



Teen faces more charges in body dump

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Friday, October 20, 2006

By Paul Janczewski

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FLINT - Charges against Rodrick D. Phillips, alleging he helped dispose of a dead body, were dismissed Thursday.

But prosecutors immediately refiled the charges against Phillips, 17, of Flint, and planned to merge them with others in another file stemming from the same incident.

Police and prosecutors allege that Lisa L. Upchurch killed her lover when he received a cellphone call from another woman, and then persuaded her son, 15, and Phillips to dispose of the body.

Phillips is charged with tampering with evidence and being an accessory after the fact to a felony in the alleged disposal of the body of Dennis R. Mitchell.

The partially nude body of Mitchell, 46, was discovered about 7 p.m. Sept. 11 in the Flint River off Boulevard Drive near Whaley Park, south of Dort Highway.

Police and prosecutors believe he was killed Sept. 6 by Upchurch, 39, of Flint.

The slaying occurred at her home, 1321 Hughes Ave., police said.

Police believe the body was dumped in Mott Lake, which flows into the Flint River.

The son faces charges in juvenile court and has another hearing scheduled for Nov. 28.

Phillips also is charged with stealing a safe and a car from Mitchell's residence after he was slain.

Charges in that case are safe breaking, a life felony, second-degree home invasion and car theft, a 5-year felony.

Assistant Genesee County Prosecutor Karen Hanson told Flint District Judge Nathaniel C. Perry III that all the police reports were not immediately available for a preliminary hearing scheduled for Thursday morning.

Attorney Terry Bankert, who represents Phillips, objected and asked Perry to dismiss the charges, which he did.

Hanson refiled the charges and combined the two cases into one against Phillips, who is being held in the Genesee County Jail.

Upchurch is being tested to determine if she is competent for trial and can be held criminally responsible for her actions. She is charged with murder, a life felony; tampering with evidence, a 10-year felony; possession of a firearm by a felon, a 5-year felony; and felony firearms.

A hearing for her is scheduled for Oct. 31 before Perry.

Flint Police Sgt. Terry Coon said the other charges Phillips faces occurred after Mitchell's body was dropped into the lake.

Coon said Phillips and others went to the victim's house and stole a safe, a large-screen television set and other items. Those items have not been recovered, Coon said, adding that police are looking for the people who were with Phillips. They have not been charged.

Coon said Phillips and others returned later to the victim's house and took his car.

The vehicle was recovered about 10 days after the slaying, he said.

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